

The Bloomfield Record.

Typhoid Fever—How to Prevent It.

This disease is never caused except by the introduction into the system of the germ of the disease—which can originate only through the operation of neglected organic wastes, or by communication through the lungs or stomach by means of food air or water, or from the germs arising from the persons or from the excreta of typhoid patients. So far as its contagion is concerned, ample ventilation of the sick room and the immediate removal or disinfection of the feces are ample preventives. It is not contagious, as smallpox is, but is spread by the action of germs which infect the locality of the patient, and extend more or less widely according to the precautions used to confine it. There is not necessarily the least danger that the disease will attack even the constant attendant of the patient, if proper care is taken. With the household himself rests the entire responsibility of the origin of every first case breaking out in his household. This is a certain and thoroughly well established fact, and there attaches to him the full measure of guilt for every such case. This is a responsibility for which the community should hold him strictly accountable. It would really be as correct to ascribe a reformed murder to Providence as to attempt in this way to console ourselves for a fatal attack of typhoid fever. We are taught that we shall not cleave our child's skull with an ax, and that if we do, death will surely result; but we are no less absolutely taught that we shall not poison our child's blood with the foul emanations of our house drains and with the contamination of our drinking water wells, lest the same fatal result follow. We may ignorantly load the water with which our families are supplied with lead poison, and so without the guilt of intention; or we may ignorantly poison our wells by the infiltration of infected organic matter, and in this case as in the other, be acquitted of the charge of criminal intent. But in these days, when so much has been published concerning the origin of diseases of this class, however free we may be of all criminal intent, the serious charge of criminal neglect must surely lie at our door.

It may be assumed, without hesitation, that, whenever a pronounced case of typhoid breaks out in an isolated country house, or when any form of low fever occurs, though it may fail to assume a distinct typhoid character, there is in that house, or about it, or in connection with its supply of drinking water, some accumulation of neglected filth, some pile of rotten vegetables in the cellar, some overflow from a barnyard, some spot of earth saturated with the slops of the kitchen or some other form of impurity, to which the origin of the disease may be distinctly traced. The spread of typhoid is very generally occasioned by germs contained in the bowel discharge of fever patients; but the disease is constantly originating itself where no such exists, and every first attack is a plain indication that either at home or in some house at which the patient has visited, one or two things have occurred: (1) there has been an exhalation of poisonous organic gases from a kitchen yard, from a neglected cellar, or from some other source of bad air, which has entered the lungs and planted there the germ of the disease; or (2) either in the food or in the drink of the patient, these germs, originating in the same organic putrescence, have found their way to the stomach. In either case the blood is attacked; the subject may have been sufficiently robust and vigorous, or sufficiently unsusceptible to infection, to have avoided a serious or fatal illness; but in every instance the danger has been incurred, and, when incurred, the risk must be the same as in taking any other form of slow poison. This is not theory, but simply a well established fact, demonstrated by long, careful, and frequently repeated investigation. The precise character of typhoid infection and the exact manner of operation when introduced into the blood, are not known; but that it always originates in the food described, and that it may invariably be prevented by the use of proper sanitary precautions, is absolutely known.

This being the case, it lies perfectly within the province of every farmer (and if the farmer will not attend to such matters of his own accord, his wife has a way of urging him into it) to remove, while it is yet time, any source of infection to which his house may be liable. Vegetables in any considerable amount should not be kept in the house cellar, and at least once a week the floor of the cellar should be swept and every shred of waste vegetables removed. Even when this is done, the cellar should be ventilated by a window or other small opening toward the quarter least exposed to cold winds (and in summer on every side); the privy, if a privy is used, should be well away from the house, and especially far from the well, unless its contents are received in a tight box and entirely absorbed by dry earth or ashes, and even then frequently removed; the chamber slops of the house should never, under any circumstances, be thrown into the privy vault, nor into a porous cesspool, from which they can leach into the ground and through the ground for a long distance into the well, or into and around the foundation of the house. The same disposal of the liquid wastes of the kitchen is desirable, but not so absolutely important. It is, however, important that this should be led by an impervious drain to a point well away from the house and from the well; and all manner of nondescript refuse material, such as is sloughed off by every

household in the ordinary course of its living, should be removed at least daily from the near vicinity of the dwelling, and the vessels in which it accumulates should be frequently changed; mature heaps should not be left to ferment and send off their exhalations at a point whence frequent winds waft them toward and into the dwelling, nor should the barnyard be allowed to drain (either over the surface or through a porous soil) toward the house or well. If all these precautions are taken, the well will be tolerably safe, and in most cases absolutely safe; but if there is any doubt on the point, then let no well water be drunk except after boiling; or the drinking water of the house may be taken entirely from a filtering cistern, of which the filtering bed is sufficient to hold back all organic matter.

If all these points are well attended to, and if the ordinary rules of cleanliness be observed in the household, the members of the family may be considered as safe against attacks of typhoid fever—Scientific American.

A Hearty Tribute.

I met Mr. Hackett, the actor, shortly after his return from England. It was in the treasurer's office of the old National Theater in Boston, on which occasion he related several interesting incidents of his professional tour abroad. One of them I well remember. It was at Dublin, on the first night of his representation of Rip Van Winkle. The actors may have taken some slight liberties with the original text.

"In the scene," said Mr. Hackett, "where Rip finds himself in his native village, after his long sleep, lost in amazement at the change which meets his eye on every hand, a person of whom he is making inquiries mentions the name of 'Washington.' 'Washington,' repeats Rip. 'Who is he?' 'The other, a fellow who happened to have a splendid voice, replies: 'What! did you never hear the name of the immortal George Washington, the apostle of liberty, and the father of his country?'"

"Upon the falling of those words, delivered most impressively, the whole audience, from pit to gallery, arose as one man, and the shouting, the clapping of hands, and the stamping of feet shook the building. These deafening plaudits continued for some time, and wound up with three hearty cheers for George Washington."

"I cannot describe to you my feelings during this unlooked-for triumph of national enthusiasm. I choked—the tears gushed from my eyes; and I can assure you it was by a great effort that I restrained myself from destroying all the illusions of the scene, by breaking the fetters with which the age and character of Rip had invested me, and exclaiming, in the fullness of my heart: 'God bless old Ireland.'"

A FEMALE PICKPOCKET.—An English lady pickpocket—Miss Clay, alias Spencer, alias Wilson—was some little time ago sentenced in Paris to three years imprisonment. In the female Penitentiary of St. Lazare her conduct is described as exemplary. She knelt down devoutly at mass, very frequently communicated, and so gained the confidence of the Sisters of Charity in charge that, after an unusually short period of probation, she was allowed the run of the prison without being watched. Availing herself of this privilege she slipped into one of the sister's cells, and, speedily dressing herself in the costume of a nun, walked straight out into the street, the wardens saluting her as she passed. She was not missed till three hours after her escape, and the efforts of the police to apprehend her have been hitherto unsuccessful. Being well known to her countrymen of the light fingered fraternity domiciled in Paris it is supposed that their gallantry has found means to send her to London.

HONOR TO THE MARTYRS.—At a spelling match in Cambridge, Mass., an illuminated alphabet card was presented to the first one down. The chairman, in making the presentation, said: "In all the world's great conflicts, those who have fallen first have been held longest in remembrance. They are, in a sense, the martyrs. The names of the few who fell at Lexington, whether of fliers or privates, are engraven upon stone; while the thousands who fell later in the struggle were assigned to nameless graves. So this evening in the battle of Lexicon (excuse a poor pun) may you who received the first fatal wound, preserve this memento as an heirloom to be handed down to your children's children."

Telegraph operators are said to suffer from a peculiar kind of palsy. When very busily and constantly employed, they find that after some years they are unable to signal certain signs distinctly. They change their fingers, and get rid of the trouble for a time; but their fingers fail, and if the labor is persisted in, the whole arm gives out and the brain becomes affected.

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